

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 05178 291931Z
ACTION EUR-08

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
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USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, UK
SUBJECT: NARCOTICS: THEBAINE AVAILABILITY FOR POTENTIAL
IMPORT INTO THE U.S.

REF: STATE 66063

1. OTHER THAN NORMAL COMMERCIAL CONSIDERATIONS. THE ONLY
POSSIBLE INHIBITION TO THE EXPORT OF THEBAINE BY UK MANU-
FACTURERS TO THE U.S. IS THE AVAILABILITY OF RAW OPIUM.
LEGAL RESTRICTIONS CONTROLLING EXPORT ARE THOSE ACCEPTED
UNDER THE SINGLE CONVENTION, I.E. U.S. IMPORTER WOULD
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HAVE TO PROVIDE UK EXPORTER WITH COPY OF ITS IMPORT
LICENSE AND CERTIFICATE, WHEREUPON UK EXPORTER WOULD
APPLY TO HOME OFFICE FOR EXPORT PERMIT. WHILE WE HAVE
NOT CONTACTED UK MANUFACTURERS. WE UNDERSTAND FROM HOME
OFFICE SOURCES THAT EXCHANGE OF CODEINE FOR THEBAINE MAY
WELL BE POSSIBLE. THEY STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT PRICE
FACTOR MAY HAVE CONSIDERABLE IMPACT ON SUCH A TRANS-

ACTION. ALMOST ALL MEDICINE IS SOLD IN UK THROUGH THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE, WHICH WOULD BE EXTREMELY RELUCTANT TO PAY PREMIUM FOR IMPORTED U.S. CODEINE IN ORDER TO SUBSIDIZE THEBAINE EXPORTS TO U.S.

2. THERE ARE THREE MAIN PRODUCERS OF THEBAINE FROM OPIUM BASE IN UK: MACFARLAND & SMITH (LARGEST EUROPEAN OPIATE MANUFACTURER), MAY & BAKER, AND BOOTS. THE LATTER TWO EXPORTED JUST UNDER 300 KILOGRAMS OF THEBAINE TO THEIR AFFILIATES AROUND THE WORLD IN 1975, SO SOME EXPORT POTENTIAL DOES EXIST.

3. MACFARLAND & SMITH IS ONLY COMPANY GROWING BRACTEATUM EXPERIMENTALLY. HOWEVER, THEIR PRODUCTION FROM THIS SOURCE IS INCONSEQUENTIAL AND LIKELY TO REMAIN SO. HOME OFFICE SOURCES STATE THAT THEY WOULD NOT CONSIDER ANY REQUEST TO INCREASE BRACTEATUM PRODUCTION. THEY DO NOT WISH TO COMPOUND PROBLEM OF OVER-SUPPLY OF LICIT OPIUM BY ADDING BRACTEATUM TO IT. THEY REFERRED TO CANADIAN PAPER SUBMITTED AT FEBRUARY CND MEETING IN GENEVA SHOWING LIKELY OVER-SUPPLY OF LICIT OPIUM OVER NEXT TEN YEARS. THEY AGREE WITH CANADIAN PAPER'S CONCLUSIONS AND REGARDLESS OF SHORTAGES AT MOMENT, UK FIRMS ARE REPORTED CONVINCED THAT THERE WILL BE PLENTIFUL SUPPLIES IN THE FUTURE.

4. DURING OUR DISCUSSION, HOME OFFICE OFFICIALS ASKED WHICH DERIVATIVES OF THEBAINE U.S. FIRMS ARE PLANNING TO MANUFACTURE. UK SCIENTISTS KNOW OF VERY FEW, APART FROM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE "EXTREMELY DANGEROUS" BENTLEY COMPOUNDS. THEY WOULD BE MOST INTERESTED IN LEARNING WHAT TYPES OF COMPOUNDS U.S. FIRMS ARE EXPERIMENTING WITH AND POINT OUT THAT, IF MANUFACTURED, THESE WOULD HAVE TO BE NOTIFIED UNDER THE SINGLE CONVENTION.

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Message Attributes

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